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ADDENDUM II

Analysis of Written Comments
Agency Employee Survey
Summer 1976
(DDO Respondents)

1. This analysis is an abstract of the responses made by employees of the Directorate of Operations to the employee survey conducted in the summer of 1976. Written responses were requested to two questions in the survey, i.e., questions 84 and 87. Question #84 deals with whether or not external pressures (investigations, disclosures, etc.) had any significant negative influence on one's ability to do his/her job. The second solicits written responses at the option of the participant relating to any items on the questionnaire and offers the participant the opportunity to make suggestions and/or remarks regarding any topics of interest pertaining to the Agency. Forty-one percent of the DDO respondents provided written responses to one or both of these items.

2. The responses are divided into several broad categories relating to each of the two questions 84 and 87. In responding to question number 87, the most commonly addressed topics are: management of both the Directorate and Agency levels; personnel management; promotional opportunity, especially at the clerical level; the home-base concept; and the LOI. Among other topics less frequently mentioned are: working conditions; the bureaucracy; politics; opportunities for advancement within the career service; and DCD placement in the DDO. Most of the respondent's comments are directed to a specific item in the questionnaire, and respondent's clarification of and added emphasis to these questions. Representative remarks cited here, but some of the responses have been edited to avoid possible identification of the respondent.

a. Comments Dealing with Question 84

(1) The majority of those persons responding to this question indicate that while external investigations and subsequent disclosures had a negative impact on their ability to perform their jobs, they do not specifically cite a decline in morale.

(2) The paperwork and file-searching to fulfill investigative requests is viewed as excessive and has hampered day-to-day activities. The Freedom of Information and Privacy Act requirements are also cited as time-consuming. Major points of

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(3) That the confusion generated by the investigations led to many collection programs being halted or severely curtailed is also alleged by several respondents. Though some respondents indicated that Agency personnel are "running scared", they do not believe the investigations will have a serious long-term adverse impact on the Agency.

b. Comments Dealing with Question 87

(1) The Career Service's responsibility in the area of career management came under heavy fire. In theory, career counseling received generally good marks, but in practice it is often criticized for its inability to effect changes or to bring any "clout" to bear on operating components with respect to solutions to the counselee problems. The same beliefs held true for rotational tours. Most respondents think that while experience gained from assignment to different components is beneficial, in career terms it often proves detrimental. This feeling is caused in most part by the perceived failure of the home-base concept to adequately support the rotating officer during the annual promotion exercise.

(2) The term "personnel management" apparently means different things to different people. Some respondents link it directly with the DDO/CMG and component management, while others connect it with Personnel Staffs within the Directorate and with the main office of Personnel. In either case, negative images are presented. Careers are not being properly managed, and individual personnel officers are often cited as insensitive to the employee's need. The lack of uniform Agency-wide personnel policies and practices is also cited by several respondents.

(3) The opportunity for promotion and the evaluation system is of major concern, especially at the clerical levels. (In several instances, professional employees commented on clerical advancement problems noting that they personally have no complaints).

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Clerical employees feel penalized by having to occupy a position with headroom in order to be promoted, while Personal Rank Assignment (PRA's) are permitted for "professional" employees at all grade levels. In reviewing clerical employee comments on the promotion process and position grade structure we note considerable lack of understanding of both systems. Often their suggested solution to the problems is to simply raise the position grades, thus providing headroom. Respondents at all grade levels observe that promotions are often based not on performance or ability, but on who you know or how well the supervisor could write fitness reports and promotion recommendations. Quality Step Increases and merit awards are also described as not being utilized as intended.

(4) The majority of comments regarding the LOI note either the employee has never been given one, does not have one for the current job, or that the exercise was a bureaucratic waste of time.

(5) Problems in working conditions concern many respondents. Selected examples are: Lighting (the hallways are too dark as well as the ground floor offices); cleanliness (offices are dirty and should be cleaned more often); cafeteria (poor food at exorbitant prices); parking (unfair distribution of permits); space (move the computers out and the people back in).

(6) Responses to the subject of Agency and Directorate management dealt primarily with what is termed the increasing "bureaucratization" of the Agency. Most often criticized is the proliferation of paperwork, the layering of management levels, and the decision-making process which is "endless" and takes too much time and requires too many "approvals". Another commonly expressed feeling is disenchantment with Agency leadership on all levels. Some persons feel that leaders in the Agency are no longer examples to be followed and that managers are most often not selected on the basis of their ability to lead and motivate but through the "old boy" network.

(7) The question on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) drew considerable response across a broad spectrum. In the area of racial imbalance, respondents criticized the "quota system" and stress the view that ability should be the first consideration in employee selection. Both men and women rejected tokenism in hiring, assignment and promotion. Women in the Directorate feel discrimination in

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promotions and assignments, the latter the most often cited.

(8) Aside from its use as a tool in the evaluation process, the fitness report is given little attention. There are some suggestions at the GS 5-8 and GS 9-11 grade levels that the subordinates be permitted to rate the supervisors.

(9) Training received mixed reviews. Some respondents praise it, some cite a lack of opportunity to attend training courses, while others write that they received training which they were unable to utilize.



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(11) Services offered by the Agency are generally considered to be very good. Suggestions are offered for improvements such as a dental plan added to health insurance benefits, and publishing more information on the many benefits available to Agency employees.

(12) Based on the written responses, employee morale in the DO may be described as moderate to low in most cases. The problems respondents cite as affecting morale for the most part do not stem from the recent investigations and disclosures; many persons commented explicitly to that effect. Lack of leadership and irresponsible management are mentioned most frequently as factors for lowered morale and eroding esprit de corps.

3. The following excerpts from written comments made by survey participants are offered as being reasonably representative of DO employee attitudes along selected topic areas.

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